

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims in the above-referenced application.

1-10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) A gaming method comprising:

selecting and displaying a combination of symbols in a matrix of M rows and N columns, selected symbols including at least one special symbol and other symbols, the matrix having multiple pay lines across the N columns; and

when the special symbol is displayed in a particular column, converting ~~other~~ adjacent symbols in the same particular column to be identical to the special symbol, wherein the identical special symbols in the particular column are in different pay lines.

12. (cancelled)

13. (previously presented) The method of Claim 11 wherein said converting comprises converting a visual image of symbols to the special symbol.

14. (previously presented) The method of Claim 11 wherein said special symbol is a wild card.

15. (previously presented) The method of Claim 11 further comprising determining, after said converting, whether symbols in said matrix include a winning combination of symbols by determining symbols across at least one pay line.

16. (previously presented) The method of Claim 11 wherein said multiple pay lines comprises horizontal pay lines.

17. (previously presented) The method of Claim 16 wherein said multiple pay lines further comprise bent pay lines.

18-32. (cancelled)

33. (currently amended) A gaming device comprising:
a display device; and
control circuitry for controlling said display device, said control circuitry being configured for controlling said display device to display a combination of selected symbols in a matrix of M rows and N columns, the matrix having multiple pay lines across the N columns, selected symbols in said matrix including at least one special symbol and other symbols, and for controlling said display device such that, when the special symbol is displayed in a particular column, ~~other~~ adjacent symbols in the same particular column are converted to be identical to the special symbol, wherein the identical special symbols in the particular column are in different pay lines.

34. (cancelled)

35. (previously presented) The device of Claim 33 wherein said special symbol is a wild card.

36. (previously presented) The device of Claim 33 further comprising a payout table for determining, after conversion of said symbols, whether symbols in said matrix include a winning combination of symbols across at least one pay line.

37. (previously presented) The device of Claim 33 wherein said multiple pay lines comprises horizontal pay lines.

38. (previously presented) The device of Claim 37 wherein said multiple pay lines further comprise bent pay lines.

39-44. (cancelled)